

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 05015 291308Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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O P 291146Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9442
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

S E C R E T BEIRUT 5015

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MOPS, LE, SY, IS
SUBJECT: BRITISH AMBASSADOR ON PROSPECTS FOR RENEWED CLASHES

1. IN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS EVENING AUGUST 28, BRITISH AMBASSADOR WAKEFIELD TOLD ME HIS EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED ANOTHER ALARMIST REPORT FROM CHAMOUNIST NABIL NUJAYM. ACCORDING TO LATTER, HIS PATRON DANY CHAMOUN HAD GIVEN UP AND WITHDRAWN FROM NEGOTIATIONS FOR A DISENGAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT IN THE BEIRUT AREA. THE GAME PLAN THAT HAS NOW BEEN WORKED OUT BY THE HARD-LINE CHAMOUNISTS WITH THE ISRAELIS IS THAT AS SOON AS THE CAMP DAVID MEETING IS OVER, THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS HERE WILL PROVOKE THE SYRIANS AND THEN WITHDRAW INTO ONE OF THE CHRISTIAN SUBURBS IN SUCH A WAY AS DRAW THE SYRIANS TROOPS PHYSICALLY INTO IT. AT THIS POINT THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS WOULD CALL FOR ISRAELI INTERVENTION AND THE ISRAELIS WOULD RESPOND BY SENDING IN ISRAELI GROUND TROOPS THROUGH ONE OR MORE AVENUES OF APPROACH, ALTERNATIVELY INCLUDING A DIRECT THRUST UP THE BIQAA VALLEY AND LANDING AT JOUNIEH.

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I COMMENTED TO WAKEFIELD THAT AMBASSADOR PARKER CONSIDERS NUJAYM TO BE A "HYSTERICAL" SOURCE.

2. WAKEFIELD INDICATED THAT HE IS UNDER CONTINUED PRESSURE FROM THE FCO TO COME UP WITH PROPOSALS FOR DISENGAGEMENT OR OTHER WAYS OF DAMPING DOWN THE CRISIS HERE, AND ASKED WHAT WE ARE THINKING

OF DOING. I TOLD HIM THERE HAD BEEN A SERIES
OF EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT AND THE
FIELD ON PROPOSALS FOR SOME FORM OF MINOR SYRIAN
DISENGAGEMENT, BUT THAT THE DEPARTMENT'S THINKING
ON THESE PROPOSALS IS EVOLVING SO STEADILY THAT IT
WOULD BE BEST IF THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON
CONTACTED SOMEONE LIKE DRAPER ON THEM

3. MEANWHILE WAKEFIELD AND I AGAIN AGREED ON THE
IMPORTANCE OF TRYING TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE
SYRIANS HERE. BRITISH HAVE MADE A TRY BUT SO FAR
NOT SUCCEEDED.

4. COMMENT: WAKEFIELD IS ACTIVE IN MAINTAINING
CLOSE TOUCH WITH TOP LEVEL OF GOL. IT WILL BE
IMPORTANT FOR US TO KEEP SYNCHRONIZED WITH THE
BRITISH ON POLICY MOVES SUCH AS THAT PRESAGED IN
STATE 218595.
KINSOLVING

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NNN

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